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Tunisia
Post Report

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Cover: Punic masks, Carthage museum.

This is the official post report prepared by the post. The information contained herein is directed to official U.S. Government employees and their families. Any other information concerning the facts as set forth herein is to be regarded as unofficial information.

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The Host Country

Area, Geography, and Climate

The Republic of Tunisia lies at the northernmost tip of Africa, a strategic location that has made it throughout history a crossroads between Europe and the Middle East. Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, and northwestern Libya form the Maghreb (the West, in Arabic), an area of common history, language, ethnic groups, and culture.

The country's area of 63,378 square miles is slightly smaller than Missouri. Tunisia has 1,000 miles of Mediterranean coastline. Northern Tunisia is the most heavily populated part of the country, mountainous (although elevations rarely reach 3,000 feet), and relatively fertile. The north also claims Tunisia's one major river, the Majardah. Central Tunisia is semiarid highland with poor soil, little rainfall, and scant population. The south is arid and barren, except for occasional oases, as it merges with the Sahara.

Tunisia's climate is temperate with mild winters and hot summers. The countryside becomes dry and brown in summer and quite green in winter. Summers in Tunis are characterized by high temperatures and low humidity; evenings are pleasant. Winters are short, rainy, humid, and chilly. The temperature rarely is below freezing. Snow occurs in the northwestern mountain region. From mid-May until mid-October the sky is usually cloudless and little rain falls. In an average year only 120 days have any rainfall.

Population

Tunisia's 1985 population is estimated at 7 million. The population is very young—over half are under the age of 21—and increasingly urban.

Almost all Tunisians are Arabs and Muslims. Islam is the state religion, and nearly all Tunisians are Sunnis. Religious minorities are tolerated and protected, including a small Jewish population. Tunis has, in addition to its many mosques and madersas, several functioning churches (Catholic and Protestant, with services in French and English) and a Jewish synagogue.

Over 60% of Tunisia's population age 15 and over is literate, due in large part to the strong emphasis the President has placed, since independence, on universal education. Arabic is the official language, but French is widely spoken as a second language, particularly in urban areas.

Public Institutions

Tunisia's form of government is characterized as a presidential republic with decisionmaking centered in the executive branch. The President appoints the Prime Minister, the Cabinet, and 22 provincial governors. The constitution of the republic was promulgated on June 1, 1959. The National Assembly is elected by direct universal suffrage for a 5-year term and meets throughout the year. There are four legal parties: the Destourian Socialist Party, the MDS (Democratic Socialist Movement), the MUP 2 (Popular Union Movement), and the PCT (Tunisian Communist Party), and other active political movements such as the MIT (Tunisian Islamist Movement), MUP 1, Arab Progressive Group, and the Arab Nationalists.

The former religious tribunals have been integrated into secular courts to form a single three-level judiciary: first-instance courts, courts of appeal, and the highest judicial body, the Court of Cassation, which ultimately resolves cases not solved in the lower courts. All judicial proceedings are in Arabic. In addition to the existing auditing court, an administrative jurisdiction exists.

Women share equal rights with men on the basis of a personal-status code established shortly after independence. This code is considered a model for developing courtries. Polygamy is illegal.

Arts, Science, and Education

Tunisia's cultural and artistic heritage is a blending of Phoenician, Roman, Arab, Turkish, French, and Berber influence. This rich heritage can be seen throughout the country, in magnificent collections of Roman mosaics and statues, Phoenician coins and jewelry, and early Arab manuscripts. Archeological sites scattered through the country are constant reminders of the richness of Tunisia's heritage. Remains of Punic ports, a Roman coliseum, aqueduct, numerous temples and villas, and Turkish forts are all parts of Tunisia's living past.

The University of Tunis, Tunisia's only university, was established in 1960 under the Ministry of National Education. Of the 35,000 students currently enrolled in its 25 faculties, 40% are women. Entry requires passing the baccalaureate and is highly selective. Most of the faculties are in the Tunis metropolitan area; others are in Sousse (medicine), Sfax (medicine), and Monastir (science). Institutes affiliated with the university also provide advanced study in public administration, management, press and communications, commerce, languages, and education.

The university, however, only represents the acme of an educational system that has expanded rapidly since independence. Today more than a million students, almost 90% of school-age children, attend public schools. To earn the high school baccalaureate degree, they must attend at least 13 years of school and pass the qualifying exams. This achievement-oriented system results in a high literacy rate (62% of Tunisians are considered literate). Concurrently, with the expansion of education, the government promoted the Arabicization of instruction. Thus, many students who do not continue their educations beyond the primary level are literate in Arabic rather than French.

Commerce and Industry

Since independence the Tunisian Government has prepared a series of economic development plans aimed at raising the standard of living, improving and diversifying agriculture, and promoting industry. All economic planning is directed toward resolving Tunisia's persistent and growing unemployment problem. In 1983, the official unemployment figure was 18%; a more realistic figure would be 25%, whereas rural unemployment exceeds 50% in some regions. Current 5-year plan (1982–86) goals include an annual economic growth rate of 6%, 60,000 additional jobs annually, and balanced trade in food products. Actual performance as of late 1984 has fallen well below plan targets.

Agriculture is the country's major occupation and main source of income for 40% of the population. In the past 5-year plan, a 4.4% annual growth rate was projected but agriculture, heavily dependent on weather, was below projected levels. Traditional crops are cereals, olives, grapes, and dates. Citrus fruits, vegetables, and almonds are also produced.

Oil exports are Tunisia's largest source of foreign exchange earnings. National oil production from existing fields peaked at 5.4 million tons in 1981 and remains at roughly that level to date. Oil exploration is currently being conducted throughout the country, and several American firms are involved. In 1967, the oil field at El Borma, in southern Tunisia, was established. It has 55 million tons of recoverable reserves and currently produces over 3 million tons. The offshore Ashtart field, in the Gulf of Gabes, has recoverable reserves of 35 million tons and produces more than 2 million tons annually. Natural gas production is limited at present, but royalties from Algerian gas flowing through Tunisia and possible future production from the large offshore field at Miskar and several recently discovered fields promise substantial quantities of natural gas, as well as some oil.

Phosphates and some iron, fluoride, barite, lead, and zinc are also exploited. Tunisia ranks fourth worldwide in phosphate exports and is a leader in exports of phosphoric acid.

The cement and food processing industries are expanding. New industries, including textiles, paper pulp manufacture from esparto grass, a steel mill, an oil refinery, assembly plants for trucks, automobiles, and tractors, as well as the production of enriched phosphate fertilizers, have been created. An industrial complex has been developed at Gabes based on a phosphoric acid plant, and a new port was established there in 1972. Additional fertilizer and chemical plants are being planned for the Gabes area.

Tourism is also an important foreign exchange earner for Tunisia, providing 20% of hard currency earnings. Large investments in this sector from other Arab countries have led to rapid expansion of tourism infrastructure. However, the number of tourists dropped from over 2 million in 1981 to just over 1 million in 1984. About 10,000 Americans entered Tunisia in 1984. Tourism earnings continued to decline in 1984, down 7.2% from those of 1983.

Another important source of foreign income is the remittances from the 300,000 Tunisians working abroad. These remittances had been bringing in over $250 million annually, but have been slowly declining since 1982.

Tunisian artisans, under the leadership of the Office National de l'Artisanat, are striving to preserve their traditional crafts, such as rugmaking, pottery, jewelry, and iron work.

Tunisia is meeting the challenges of scarce natural resources and population pressures with a determination that has attracted interest from many aid-giving countries. Since independence, the U.S. has been the most important source of such assistance and will continue to support Tunisian development efforts. During the Fifth Plan (1977–81), the U.S. provided grants, loans, and government-guaranteed private credits totaling $150 million to finance various programs. Sixth Plan (1982–86) assistance from the U.S. should exceed that amount. Private U.S. investment (not counting petroleum exploration) is slowly increasing after a decline lasting several years, and now exceeds $10 million. Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, F.R.G., France, Italy, Kuwait, Norway, the P.R.C., Sweden, the U.S.S.R., Yugoslavia, and several other countries are actively interested in Tunisian development.

Transportation

Automobiles

The Embassy will provide transportation to your office on your first day at post. If you wish, the Motor Pool will also take you and your family to the American Cooperative School to complete the registration formalities. The Embassy does not rent vehicles to newly arrived employees. Avis, Hertz, and other rental cars are available, sometimes at an Embassy discount, but can be expensive. Taxis are plentiful and reasonably priced. Employees are expected to make their own transportation arrangements.

Tunisian customs regulations regarding vehicles make a clear distinction between U.S. Government employees with diplomatic status and those without. Those without diplomatic status are given PAT plates and are permitted to register only one personal vehicle duty free. Employees with diplomatic status are given CD plates. Those with diplomatic status and with a spouse residing at post are permitted to register up to two personal vehicles. An individual may not register a duty-free vehicle, sell, or otherwise dispose of that vehicle, and then import or purchase another one to replace it. The Tunisian Government rarely grants exceptions to this rule.

Recent Tunisian customs decisions have greatly reduced opportunities for resale of automobiles upon departure from post. Generally, cars more than 5 years old will not be approved for sale to persons without duty-free privileges, and the high import duty for all cars tends to limit the number of potential buyers. As a consequence, most sales are between persons with duty-free privileges, and newly arriving employees will normally find that there are several used cars on the market.

Vehicles imported into Tunisia should not be ostentatious and should include only normal accessories. Yellow headlights are required by law in Tunisia. They may be obtained at post but are somewhat expensive. An alternative is to put yellow paint on your existing headlights. A heater and air-conditioner are desirable. Right-hand-drive vehicles may be driven.

American cars are not popular in Tunisia owing to a lack of high-quality maintenance and spare parts. Tunisian traffic and parking can be particularly difficult to negotiate in a large American car. Furthermore, because of the high import duty on American cars paid by those without duty-free privileges, American automobiles (including European cars built to American specifications) have limited resale value. If you decide to bring an American car to post, be sure to ship adequate spare parts for maintenance. Some local mechanics have knowledge of American cars and, barring the need for major repairs, you can probably maintain the car. Because traffic is difficult in

Tunisia and fender-benders are common, consider bringing a middle-aged car. Personnel who wish to import an American car, however, should be prepared to ship it when they transfer.

Small European cars can be ordered locally duty free (delivery delay is a minimum of 2 months) or may be ordered directly from Europe, either after you arrive at post or from Washington. Such cars may be picked up in Paris or Frankfurt, for example, and driven to post via one of the ferry services operating from Marseilles, Genoa, or Naples. (See Getting to Post.) Many employees have found this to be an advantageous alternative to shipping a car to post, since transit time for shipped vehicles can be lengthy, and because vehicles arriving by ferry can be driven immediately with a temporary registration. Having personal transportation available upon arrival at post is a great advantage. Newly assigned employees who are considering purchasing a car in Europe and driving it to post should contact the Embassy well in advance in order to make ferry reservations.

To facilitate customs clearance, the vehicle must be registered in another country and have valid license plates before shipment to Tunisia. Such a vehicle can be cleared within 2 weeks after arrival and driven for 3 months while awaiting official Tunisian plates. If the vehicle has not been previously registered, 20–30 days will be necessary for customs clearance and temporary registration, and the vehicle may not be driven during this time.

Registering a car in Tunisia is a complicated and lengthy procedure because of the numerous formalities required. The Embassy arranges registration of personally owned vehicles. A permanent license number is assigned to each registered car, and license plates are made at owner expense. Cars must pass an annual inspection and must be insured.

Third-party liability insurance is mandatory and must be obtained locally. The price for such insurance varies according to the horsepower of the vehicle, but tends to be about $100 per year. Collision insurance is very expensive locally and can be difficult to collect quickly, due to complicated Tunisian regulations. Many employees prefer to buy collision insurance from a U.S. company in addition to locally purchased third-party liability.

A Tunisian drivers license is not required if you have a valid U.S. drivers license. It is important that your license remain valid for the duration of your assignment. If you intend to travel to other countries where you will need an international drivers license, you should obtain one in the U.S. before leaving for post. The Tunisian branch of the Automobile Association is normally not willing to issue international drivers licenses to those who are not Tunisian citizens and holders of valid Tunisian drivers licenses.

Coupons for duty-free gasoline (Esso, Mobil, Shell) can be purchased in the Vehicle Assistance Unit in GSO. Check with GSO for the hours during which these coupons are sold and for the current price.

An exception to the prohibition of shipping a foreign-purchased, foreign-made, privately owned vehicle to the U.S. has been granted to Tunisia. An employee assigned to the U.S. may ship a foreign-made, foreign-bought car at U.S. Government expense if the car meets U.S. specifications.

Local

Local transportation is not satisfactory because of overcrowding and unreliable schedules and equipment. City buses travel the business sections and more heavily populated neighborhoods of Tunis. Electric trains and buses serve the outlying suburbs. Service to most areas ends by midnight.

All the larger Tunisian cities are connected by well-kept, hardtop roads. The railroad system covers a distance of 1,200 miles and connects most of the larger cities. Some trains are new and quite comfortable. Five international airports provide service—Tunis/Carthage, Monastir, Jerba, Sfax, and Tozeur.

Taxis are plentiful in Tunis but can be almost impossible to find at certain hours and in some areas. They carry a maximum of three passengers. Fares are metered and inexpensive within the city. For a trip to the suburbs, the price should be predetermined. The taxi fare from Tunis/Carthage Airport to the Embassy or Hilton Hotel is about $2.75.

Regional

Tunis Air and Air France fly daily direct flights to Paris (2½ hours; excursion round-trip fare, for stays of 7 to 30 days, of about $245 as of mid-1985). Daily flights to Rome (1 hour; about $150 excursion fare) are provided by Tunis Air and Alitalia. Costs for short trips are about 30% higher. Most of these flights can be coordinated with flights from Paris or Rome to New York or Washington. KLM flies weekly to Amsterdam, and Tunis Air flies there twice weekly. Several flights to Frankfurt are available on either Lufthansa or Tunis Air, and there are six weekly flights to Casablanca (3 hours).

Personal air travel from Tunis may be paid for in Tunisian dinars which have been purchased at a bank with foreign exchange. In this case, the official exchange attestation must accompany the dinar payment. Tickets may also be purchased with a check from a convertible dinar account, which you may open at a local bank. Tunis Air accepts personal dollar checks from official personnel and all other airlines accept the American Express card. Some travel agencies and airlines accept other credit cards as well.

No direct sea transportation is available from Tunis to the U.S., but weekly sailings of large, comfortable ferries to Naples, Genoa, and Marseilles are available on Italian (Tirrenia) and Tunisian lines (CTN). Crossings take 22–24 hours, and reservations must be made months in advance, especially if a vehicle is involved. For more information, contact the Embassy Personnel Section or write to NAVITOUR, 8, rue d'Alger, Tunis for information on the Italian and Tunisian lines.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local and long-distance telephone service is available, but occasional losses of service occur. Telephone bills are issued quarterly, and telephone service is expensive. Overseas calls are also expensive; the cost for a 3-minute call to London is $4.50; to Rome $2.70; and to Washington $12. A Tunis–Washington call costs about twice what a Washington–Tunis call costs. Telegrams can be sent worldwide, but cost is high. Our Embassy telex number is 13379 AMBTUN TN or 14307 USATO TN (FOR ATO), or 14182 USAID TN (for AID).

Mail and Pouch

You can send or receive personal mail either by Department facilities or by international mail. Transit time is 10–14 days with either method. Departmental air facilities may be used to receive or send letters, postcards, film, voice tapes, prescription medicines, eyeglasses, and orthopedic supplies. Use ZIP code 20520.

Surface-to-air facilities may be used to receive magazines, publications, and parcels. Parcels should not exceed 40 pounds nor measure more than 24 inches in length, or 62 inches in length and girth combined. Parcels should be securely wrapped as they are subject to rough handling. Insurance and registration services are not available through the U.S. Postal Service for items sent to Foreign Service personnel through Department of State facilities. If delivered by U.S. Postal Service, the Department will accept for transmission but will not acknowledge liability for loss or damage. Packages should not contain liquids, corrosives, explosives, fragile items, firearms, live plants, foodstuffs, or any material which could prove harmful to someone handling the pouch. For surface-to-air mail, use ZIP code 20521.

No facilities exist in Tunis for sending personal packages, although negotiations for an APO are underway. Temporary FPO facilities are provided during the infrequent port calls made by U.S. Navy ships. U.S.-ordered wearing apparel may be returned via pouch with an endorsement that the package contains merchandise purchased in and received from the U.S. and which is being returned to addressee for exchange.

Address first-class mail or airmail as follows:

Embassy
Your Name
TUNIS
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

FSI, AID, USIA
Your Name
TUNIS (FSI, AID, or USIA)
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Note: Limited pouch privileges, letter mail only, not to exceed 16 oz., have been extended to AID citizen contractors and dependents:

AID Contractors
Mr. John Doe
Tunis (C)
Agency for International Development
Washington, D.C. 20523

Under the new computerized routing system the format for dependents' mail is as follows:

Ms. Sally Doe
c/o John Doe
TUNIS
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

In cases where the legal name of a dependent is different from that of the sponsor, a note can be sent to the Embassy Personnel Section requesting input into the system. Mail addressed to a dependent without listing the sponsor's name will reach its destination, but it will take longer.

U.S. postage is required only from the point of origin in the U.S. to Washington, D.C. for mail and parcels sent via Department facilities.

International Mail. The local system can be used to receive and send personal mail. Packages received require Embassy customs clearance. A small handling charge must be paid by the individual. To send packages from Tunis, the sender must appear in person at the post office with the necessary paper, tape, and string to close the package **after** customs inspection.

Address for international mail:

Your Name
American Embassy (agency abbreviation)
144 Avenue de la Liberte
1002 Tunis Belvedere, Tunisia

Radio and TV

Local radio stations broadcast in both French and Arabic on standard AM frequencies. There are two local FM stations; one broadcasts in Arabic, the other in French. A shortwave radio offers wider reception. Limited U.S. Armed Forces and VOA broadcasts can be heard mornings and evenings, and BBC broadcasts can be heard throughout the day.

Three television channels broadcast in Tunisia. A domestic channel features programs mainly in Arabic. A second TV channel features 90% of its programming in French, following a cooperative agreement which was signed with the second French TV channel. Most of the programs are in color. An Italian channel, RAI 1, offers programming relayed from Italy. Both the Arabic language channel and the Italian channel operate daily from the afternoon through late evening. The French language international channel operates from 8:30 pm–midnight, except on weekends when it begins in the afternoon.

Black-and-white and color television sets manufactured for the American market do not work in Tunisia. Only sets incorporating the continental line system are suitable. They may be purchased locally or in Europe. A local color television set of good quality costs about $450; black-and-white about $170.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The *International Herald Tribune* arrives in Tunis late on the same day of publication and is available for 60¢ a copy. Annual mail subscription is $284 and arrives 1 day after publication.

International editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* may be purchased at newsstands a day after publication for about $1.30. Magazines and newspapers sent via the Department arrive 2–3 weeks after publication.

A small library at the Community Liaison Office in the Embassy is available to American personnel. The British Embassy, USIS, and the American Cooperative School also have library facilities which can be used with permission.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

A well-equipped Health Unit, staffed by a State Department regional medical officer and contract nurse, is located on the Embassy compound. The unit includes consultation rooms, a small laboratory, and treatment pharmacy.

While most medical problems are handled at the Health Unit by the RMO or nurse (the RMO is away from post about 30% of the time), certain conditions require special consultation. Local physicians and specialists are competent and have, for the most part, received their training in Tunisia or France. A few have had advanced training in the U.K. or the U.S. Most speak French; a few, English.

Local pharmacies are well stocked with French products, including French derivatives of American prescription drugs. Prescriptions are required for all prescription drugs in Tunisia. The Health Unit has a small pharmacy, but it is primarily for the staff's use in treating illness and is not a supply pharmacy. Individuals on any chronic medications, such as antihypertensives, birth control pills, etc., should bring adequate supplies with them. Renewal prescriptions can be written by the RMO and sent to a pharmacy in the U.S.

Several dentists provide adequate general dental services; currently no orthodontists or periodontists practice in Tunis. Tunis has no facilities for handicapped individuals. Local laboratory and X-ray facilities are available and are often

used. The safety and quality of the facilities and work are monitored by the Medical Unit staff.

Employees and dependents with medical conditions which require hospitalization are either referred to one of the local hospitals or private clinics (for acute emergencies) or are evacuated outside the country. The U.S. Armed Forces medical facilities in Germany are the medical evacuation points for Tunisia, although patients may elect, on a cost-constructive basis, to travel elsewhere. The decision for evacuation is made by the regional medical officer. Many American women have their babies in Tunisia, although primiperas (first pregnancy/delivery) are strongly discouraged from delivering in Tunis.

Community Health

Public sanitation standards, although improving, are lower than in Western Europe. Trash and garbage are collected daily in Tunis and its suburbs. The municipal water system is old, and work continues to upgrade and expand its capacity. Water is not considered to be consistently potable; therefore, the Health Unit recommends boiling all drinking water. Sewage systems depend on locality; the Tunis municipal system is being enlarged and made more efficient. The lovely beaches surrounding Tunis are often contaminated and not considered safe for bathing. The Health Unit monitors these waters periodically.

Preventive Measures

Americans maintain good health during tours here. Health problems are about the same as those in Washington, although certain infectious diseases, such as hepatitis and intestinal parasites, are more common in Tunisia. Schistosomiasis and malaria are only prevalent in the oases of the south. Recommended immunizations include: gamma globulin, diphtheria-tetanus, polio, and rabies (human diploid cell vaccine).

The Embassy Health Unit provides an up-to-date Medical Handbook.

Employment for Spouses and Dependents

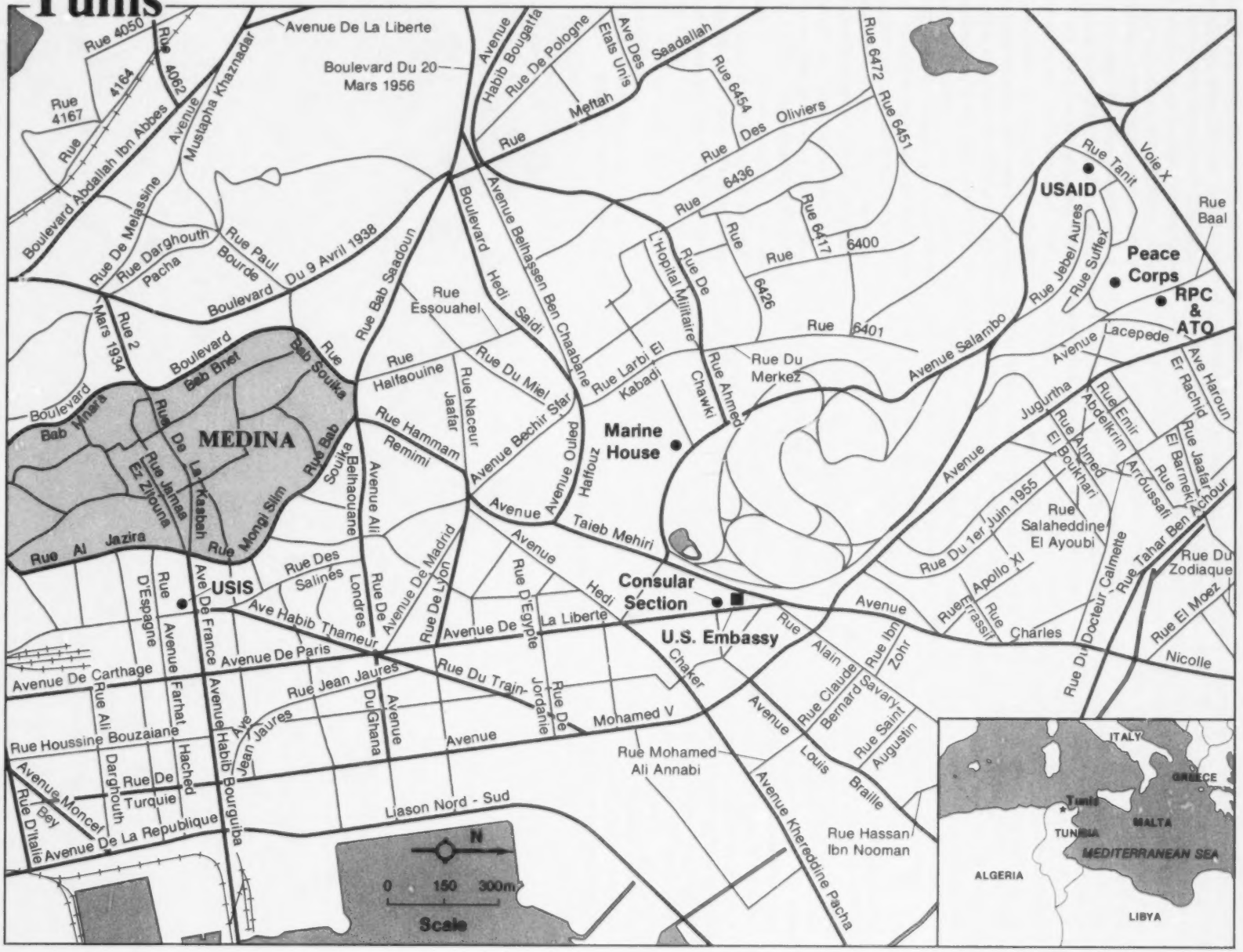
Spouses and dependents may work in the local economy only if they can perform a job requiring special skills for which Tunisians are not trained. Fluency in French or Arabic is also important. A work permit, which the employer requests from the Ministry of Social Affairs, is required and is difficult to obtain.

In 1985, the Mission (including USGERA) had 25 employment opportunities for qualified spouses and dependents. These were mixed among PIT, AFM, contract, summer, full- and part-time positions. Such temporary jobs are mostly clerical, secretarial, or translational, are sporadically available, and of varying lengths (i.e., from a few days to a year or more). Many require a security clearance. Eligibility of non-U.S. citizen spouses/dependents for such employment is determined by current regulations (e.g., FSN/AFM regulations), requirements for clearances, etc. Non-U.S. citizen dependents are eligible to apply for 12 of the 25 jobs mentioned above.

Teaching positions are sometimes available at the American Cooperative School in Tunis. Interested individuals should apply before they come by writing to the Director, c/o Department of State (TUNIS), Washington, D.C. 20520. Those trained and certified in teaching "English as a Second Language" may apply for one of the few positions occasionally available with Tunisian agencies.

Desert scene: southern Tunisia.

Tunis


Avenue De La Liberte
Boulevard Du 20 Mars 1956
Rue 4050
Rue 4062
Rue 4164
Rue 4167
Avenue Mustapha Khaznadar
Boulevard Abdallah Ibn Abbes
Rue De Melassine
Rue Darghouth Pacha
Rue Paul Bourde
Boulevard Du 9 Avril 1938
Rue Bab Saadoun
Boulevard Hedi Saidi
Avenue Habib Bougatfa
Rue De Pologne
Ave Des Etats Unis
Saadaliah
Meftah
Rue 6454
Rue 6472
Rue 6451
Rue Des Oliviers
Rue 6436
Rue 6417
Rue 6400
Rue 6426
Rue 6401
Avenue Belhassen Ben Chaabane
L'Hopital Militaire
Rue De
Rue Larbi El Kabadi
Rue Ahmed Chawki
Rue Du Merkez
Avenue Salambo
Rue Essouahel
Rue Halfaouine
Rue Du Miel
Rue Naceur Jaafar
Avenue Bechir Sfar
Avenue Ouled Haffouz
Rue Hammam Remimi
Rue Bab Souika
Rue Bab Bnet
Boulevard Bab Menara
Rue 2 Mars 1934
MEDINA
Rue De La Kasbah
Rue Jamaa Ez Zitouna
Rue Mongi Slim
Rue Al Jazira
Avenue Ali Belhaouane
Rue Des Salines
Rue De Madrid
Rue De Lyon
Avenue Taieb Mehiri
Avenue Habib Thameur
Avenue De Paris
Avenue De Carthage
Rue D'Espagne
Avenue Farhat Hached
Rue Ali Bouzaiane
Rue Houssine
Rue De Turquie
Avenue Moncer Bey
Rue D'Italie
Avenue De La Republique
Avenue Habib Bourguiba
Ave Jean Jaures
Rue Jean Jaures
Avenue Du Ghana
Rue Du Train-Jordanie
Rue De Mohamed V
Liason Nord - Sud
Rue Mohamed Ali Annabi
Avenue Khereddine Pacha
Rue Hassan Ibn Nooman
Avenue Louis Braille
Rue Saint Augustin
Rue Bernard Savary
Rue Claude Alain Chaker
Rue Ibn Zohr
Avenue De France
Avenue De L'Egypte
Avenue De La Liberte
Avenue Hedi Chaker
Rue Tanit
Voie X
Rue Baal
USAID
Peace Corps
RPC & ATO
Rue Jebel Aures
Rue Suffetx
Avenue Lacepede
Ave Haroun El Rachid
Rue Jugurtha
Rue Abdelkrim El Boukhari
Rue Emir Ahmed
Rue Jaafar El Barmeki
Rue Ardoussafi
Rue Salaheddine El Ayoubi
Rue Du 1er Juin 1955
Rue Tahar Ben Achour
Rue Du Docteur Calmette
Rue Du Zodiaque
Rue El Moez
Rue Apollo XI
Rue Ferrassi
Rue Charles Nicolle
Marine House
Consular Section
U.S. Embassy
USIS
N
0 150 300m
Scale
ITALY
GREECE
Tunis
MALTA
TUNISIA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
ALGERIA
LIBYA

American Embassy

Tunis

Tunis is built on the west bank of a shallow salt lake on Tunisia's northeastern Mediterranean coast. It has been the capital of what is now Tunisia since the 13th century. Tunis is really two cities—the old Arab town (the medina) with its narrow shop-lined streets, and the modern city which has grown up around it over the last century. Tunis continues to grow at a fast pace. Covering more than 500 square miles, it has a population of more than 1 million.

Tunis is the center of government and an active commercial center and seaport. More than 60 countries are represented by resident diplomatic missions.Tunis has been the site of the Arab League since 1979.

Tunis has four seasons, with spring and fall the most pleasant. Summers are hot and dry, although sea breezes moderate the heat. Winters are rainy and damp with days of brilliant sunshine intervening. Except at the highest altitudes, the temperature rarely goes below 40°F.

Tunis is a delightful post, with a good climate, readily available fruits and vegetables year round, and many opportunities for sightseeing, cultural enrichment, and recreation. Employees who seek a Tunis posting should be careful, however, not to expect a European atmosphere. Despite its proximity to Europe and its cultural diversity, Tunisia is very much a part of the Arab world.

The Post and Its Administration

The American Mission in Tunisia includes the Chancery, the U.S. Military Liaison Office for Tunisia (USLOT), U.S. Defense Attache's Office (USDAO), USIS, Foreign Service Institute's Arabic Language School, AID, USDA's North Africa Regional Agricultural Trade Office (ATO), Peace Corps, and the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). USIA's Regional Publication Center publishes the monthly Arabic language magazine, *Al-Majal*.

The Embassy is located at 144 Avenue de la Liberte, in the Belvedere section of Tunis. The Embassy telephone number is 782-566. The telex number is 13379 AMBTUN TN.

USIS offices and Cultural Center are at 1 rue Gamal Abdel Nasser. Telephone numbers are 243-332 and 243-815. The Regional Publication Center is located at 6 rue Saint Fulgence, Notre-Dame, Tunis. RPC can be reached at 289-383.

FSI's Arabic Language School, formerly located in Beirut, is located on Impasse du 3 Aout, near the Ambassador's residence. The telephone number is 277-422.

The AID Mission is located at 28 rue Sufex, Notre-Dame, Tunis. Telephone numbers are: 780-163, 781-305, 781-947, 782-764, 784-375, 785-147, and 783-350.

The Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) is located at 6 rue Saint Fulgence, Notre-Dame, Tunis. The telephone number is 781-553. In addition to representing USDA's interests in Tunisia, ATO has agricultural market development responsibilities in Algeria and Morocco. ATO-Tunis telex number is 14307 USATO TN.

The Peace Corps is at 2 Place Virgile, Notre-Dame, 1002 Tunis-Belvedere. The telephone numbers are 284-844, 280-377, 282-320, 890-486, and 890-176.

The American Battle Monuments Commission administers the only American cemetery in North Africa, in nearby Carthage. Buried or commemorated there are 6,565 Americans who died in the North Africa campaigns of World War II. The impressive grounds include a memorial, a small chapel, and a visitor's building. The ABMC telephone number is 278-167.

Embassy office hours are 8:30 am-5:30 pm, Monday through Friday, with an hour for lunch. Special summer hours are in effect from mid-June through early September.

Embassy, USIS, and ATO employees are paid by the Regional Management Center disbursing office in Paris; AID employees are paid by AID Washington. Allowances and salaries are paid by U.S. Treasury checks.

The Embassy provides administrative support in varying degrees to all agencies in Tunisia.

Housing

Temporary Quarters

Assigned housing, including a Welcome Kit, is normally available upon arrival. If permanent housing is not yet available, the Embassy has two transient apartments which may be used by incoming employees.

A number of good hotels are available in Tunis and its suburbs. The principal hotels in Tunis are the Hilton, the Africa, and the International; all are four-star hotels. Les Ambassadeurs, a three-star hotel, and the Belvedere, a two-star hotel, are within walking distance of the Embassy. The Megara, Baie des Singes, Amilcar, and Abou Nawas are four of the hotels located on the beaches about 10 miles north of Tunis. A diplomatic discount is given to U.S. Government employees at many of these hotels. The temporary lodging allowance and supplementary post allowance will usually cover the cost of rooms and some meals.

Permanent Housing

Ambassador's Residence. The residence was built in 1974 and is located in Sidi Bou Said overlooking the Bay of Tunis. The architecture is a combination of Arab and American. The grounds cover approximately 5 acres. A clay tennis court is located between the entrance gate and side gardens. A swimming pool and two changing rooms are located at the back. A small parking area, a garage for one large car, and houses for three staff members are also located on the grounds.

The residence contains the Ambassador's private living quarters and an area for official entertaining. A foyer with

Above left: Downtown Tunis. Above: Bizerte port.
Below left: Chancery, American Embassy, Tunis.
Below: Ambassador's residence.

a large atrium is used for receptions or informal dancing. The official area has a cloakroom, powder rooms, salon, and tearoom with a fireplace. A staircase at the far end of the salon leads down to the formal dining room. Off this room are the kitchen, pantry, laundry, and storage rooms containing refrigerators, freezers, dryer, and washer. The residence is decorated and furnished. Linens, crested china, glassware, and silver are provided. The kitchen is equipped with essentials.

A guest suite is located off the main entrance. The suite includes two bedrooms, each with a private bath, and a small balcony.

The main entrance, or a separate one, can be used to enter the family living quarters. These consist of a family living/dining room, four bedrooms, three bathrooms, and a small kitchen on the lower level. The upper level has a family sitting room with a fireplace and a balcony with space for a table and chairs. Storage space is plentiful. While the residence is provided with linens for the representational areas, it is advisable to bring your own dishes, silverware, linens, etc.

DCM Home. This lovely house, located in Carthage, was formerly the Ambassador's residence. It contains an entry hall, large living room, dining room seating up to 26 people, library opening onto a terrace, two powder rooms, breakfast room, and kitchen/pantry on the first floor. The second floor has a master bedroom and adjoining study and bath, three twin bedrooms and two baths, plus two smaller rooms and bath. A large balcony runs across the front with a wonderful view of the Bay of Tunis and the Mediterranean beyond. The house has a large, shady garden and a terrace for entertaining. Small servants quarters and a large carport are behind the house.

The living and dining rooms have traditional furnishings. The library/sitting room has a fireplace and is more informal. The home is furnished with all necessary major appliances.

Other Government-Owned or -Leased Quarters. The general level of living for Americans is most satisfactory. Senior officers with representational responsibilities will find their quarters more than adequate for the entertaining their positions require. All direct-hire U.S. Government employees are provided with either government-owned or -leased and -furnished villas. All have central heating, major appliances, and air-conditioners in occupied bedrooms.

China, glassware, kitchen and eating utensils, and bed and bathroom linens are not furnished and should be included in your household shipment. Include some of the most important items in your airfreight. Bring radios, stereo equipment, and a VHS recording system and blank tapes to post. There are VHS tape clubs at post as well as a stocked video lending library operated by USLOT. Toys, children's birthday party presents, beach toys, and a child's pool are other items you might want to include in your shipment. Some toys are available locally but are expensive and of poor quality. If you have an infant, be sure to include in your shipment all baby items that you might need, such as a stroller, high chair, etc.

A Welcome Kit of blankets, pillows, bed and bath linens, dishes, and pots and pans is available to all employees until their effects arrive. Some cribs are available.

The Embassy tries to locate appropriate leased quarters for personnel prior to their arrival. Available housing, however, is tight, and occupancy delays of up to a month or more are common. Make your housing needs known to the administrative officer as soon as possible before your arrival.

Marine Guards. The Marine house is located approximately ½ mile from the Embassy. The house consists of two adjoining duplex townhouses, and includes a kitchen, dining room, living room, eight air-conditioned bedrooms, a bar, a weight-room with sauna, and a lounge with pool table. The living room and bar open onto a terrace and back yard. The house is completely furnished.

The NCOIC currently occupies a U.S. Government-owned duplex apartment located on a compound of eight apartments across the street from the Marine house. The apartment is fully furnished and consists of four bedrooms, kitchen, living/dining room, three full bathrooms, one-half bathroom, laundry room with washer and dryer, and a large recreation room in the basement. All bedrooms and living/dining room are air-conditioned. A one-car garage goes with the apartment. The compound is completely fenced in, with guards 24 hours daily.

AID. All direct-hire and PASA personnel have government-leased and -furnished housing. Refrigerators, freezers, washers and dryers, air-conditioning units, and basic furniture are all provided by the Mission.

USIS. The public affairs officer occupies a U.S. Government-leased house in Carthage. Other USIS personnel live in U.S. Government-leased houses in the nearby suburbs. All leases provide central heating and air-conditioning in bedrooms. Furniture and major appliances are provided.

Furnishings

The Ambassador and DCM occupy fully furnished residences with representational silver, china, glassware, and linens. The officer and staff quarters have basic furniture and equipment. Bring china, pictures, and knickknacks to make your home more livable. Inexpensive chaise lounges will be useful in Tunisia with its beautiful summer weather and proximity to beaches. Most Tunisian furniture is expensive, although both indoor and outdoor wrought iron furniture is good and relatively inexpensive. The U.S. Government has furnished these items for some homes.

Most floors are marble and mosaic tile, so rugs are necessary. Some rugs are provided, and some houses have wall-to-wall carpeting in the living and dining rooms. Many people buy traditional Tunisian rugs which are attractive and available in a wide range of colors, patterns, and prices.

Utilities and Equipment

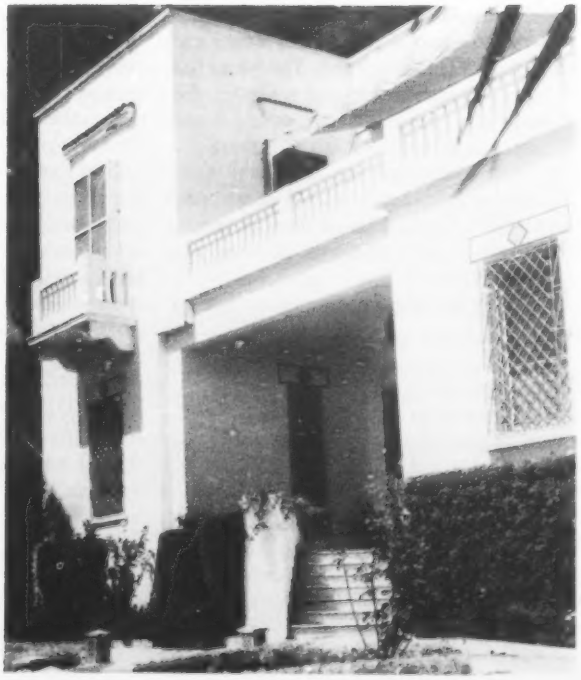
All quarters have hot and cold running water, toilet facilities, central heating, and air-conditioners in the bedrooms. Most kitchens are equipped with gas ranges.

All electric current in Tunis and its suburbs is 50 cycle. Houses have either 110–127v or 220v, and some have both. Write to post for information about the current in your assigned house. No DC or 60-cycle current exists, so all appliances should be adjusted to 50 cycles. The post can usually provide employees with a small number of transformers; additional transformers are available locally.

Most houses have sufficient electric supply to carry a 10-amp electric load. Some have a 25-amp circuit, called force motrice, to run heavy appliances. Electric skillets, toasters, and percolators operate very well on force motrice. Most three- or four-bedroom residences have enough electric supply to air-condition only the bedrooms.

Telephones are permanently installed in all U.S. Government quarters. The subscriber pays telephone charges. Rates are high and charges for calls within the metropolitan area are computed on a time basis.

Above: American Cooperative School. Above right: FSI, Tunis, Sidi Bon Said. Below: American Battle Monuments Commission Cemetery, Carthage. Below right: DCM's home.



Electric clocks requiring 60-cycle current cannot be used in Tunisia. Phonographs and other electric equipment that run on 60-cycle current should be adapted to work on 50 cycles before arrival in Tunisia. Repair and maintenance of U.S. equipment and appliances are extremely difficult in Tunis because of the scarcity of spare parts and trained technicians.

Food

Meat, poultry, fish, excellent fresh vegetables, and fruit are available year round. Tunisia has no commercial frozen food industry yet, so fruits and vegetables are available only in season. Prices are set by the government and posted in the market place. With the exception of bread and some dairy products, which are subsidized by the government, food is as expensive as in Washington.

Pasteurized and sterilized milk, eggs, and other dairy products are available, but occasional shortages occur. Tunisian and Italian brands of sterilized milk are good and have a long shelf life.

Few imported foods are sold locally; they are expensive, and supply is sporadic. You can live entirely on the local economy, but the cost is higher than similar products in the U.S.

The colorful central market in downtown Tunis has hundreds of stalls where produce, meat, fish, dairy products, etc., are sold. Pork can be purchased there and at a few other locations in the Tunis area. Smaller central markets are found in most neighborhoods. Several large chain stores offer self-service grocery facilities.

The U.S. Government Employees Recreation Association, open to all U.S. Government employees, provides American items either not available locally or unusually expensive on the local market. An initial deposit of $225 for each adult and $25 for each child, with a maximum of $500 per family, is required for membership and is refundable on departure. An additional deposit must be made to cover purchases on a day-to-day basis. The commissary carries a variety of canned fruits and vegetables, sugar, flour, coffee, tea, condiments, salad dressings, soups, mayonnaise, cooking oil and shortening, crackers and cookies, peanut butter, jellies, rice, cake mixes, paper products, sanitary items, laundry supplies, cleansers, polishes, baby food, cat and dog food, dried and canned milk, soft drinks, disposable diapers, liquor, cocktail tibits, film, cigarettes, cigars, asprin, toothpaste, shaving cream, shampoo, hair spray, and other items. Large freezer chests are stocked with frozen meat, cheese, vegetables, and poultry.

Individual orders for food and liquor are not permitted for nondiplomatic list personnel under Tunisian Government regulations. Commissary prices here are higher than in U.S. supermarkets due to transportation charges and the 9% surcharge. Shortages occur from time to time because of unavoidable shipping problems. You may wish to bring a supply of foodstuffs with your household effects, such as lemon, pepper, etc., that are not available here.

The Embassy snackbar is open for breakfast and lunch. The food is quite good and reasonably priced. A large terrace provides a wonderful place for warm-weather dining.

Clothing

A normal Washington wardrobe is suitable for Tunis. Lightweight, washable clothing is worn from May through October. Lightweight woolens can be worn the rest of the year. Winters are cold, damp, rainy, and windy so raincoats with zip-out linings are very practical. Bring an umbrella and boots.

Clothing can be purchased locally, but choice is limited and prices are high, especially for imported clothes. Imported French and British materials are good and available most of the time. Representatives from Hong Kong firms infrequently visit the Embassy and take orders for tailormade clothes and material. Delivery can take up to 3 months.

Good seamstresses and tailors are available in Tunis, but they can be expensive. The cost of having a long dress made may be more than $100, not including fabric; a good suit may cost more than $200. The commissary carries Vogue and McCalls pattern catalogs, and patterns may be ordered from the U.S. Bring sewing supplies. A wide variety of mail-order catalogs is available at the commissary and the CLO.

Locally made sandals and summer shoes are inexpensive and comfortable but not durable.

Men. Day and evening dress is comparable to Washington. Bring three to six year-round suits and three summer suits/sports coats in wash-and-wear fabrics. Include one dark suit for evening wear. You will find black tie only needed on special occasions and even then it is usually optional. Bring a good supply of shoes, shirts, underwear, socks, and bathing suits.

Women. Female employees dress as they would in Washington, while daytime apparel for nonworking women is casual. Street-length dresses are worn to dinner parties. Cocktail dresses or suits are also useful for late day or evening occasions. Dresses with jackets are especially useful in this climate as are sweaters, shawls, and coats. Winter jackets are also needed. Bring a good supply of shoes, stockings, underwear, and bathing suits. It is a good idea to set up an account with a reliable U.S. clothing or department store.

Children. Children need the same type of clothes here that they need in Washington. Few heavy garments are needed, but bring plenty of sweaters and warm jackets or coats. Bring plenty of clothes, shoes, and boots for children.

DOD Personnel. Since civilian clothing is the duty uniform in Tunisia, you will need more civilian clothes than usual. Summer/winter civilian clothing allowance is authorized for enlisted personnel. See also Special Information.

Supplies and Services

Supplies

Bring a sufficient supply of toiletries and cosmetics to last your entire tour; limited brands are sold locally and they are expensive. The commissary stocks toothpaste, razor blades, hair spray, shampoo, shaving cream, mouthwash, and some vitamins. Bring basic household medicines, baby bottles, a thermometer, baby furniture (crib, stroller, playpen), contact lens solution, sewing supplies, car parts for an American car, stationery, toys, household linens, and baby formula. The latter is not stocked by the commissary but can be ordered by individuals only by caselot.

Bring any favorite entertainment items, housekeeping and gardening items, tools, electric kitchen appliances, picnic equipment, batteries for cameras and calculators, camping equipment, sports equipment, and an ample supply of woolen blankets.

The more common sizes of black-and-white and color film (Kodak and Agfa) are available locally but are expensive. The commissary carries Kodak color film, as well as mailers for sending film to the U.S. for processing.

The commissary will accept special orders for items too large to be sent via the monthly pouch, but these items cannot exceed $200 without prior approval from the administrative officer.

Excellent Tunisian wines and beer are available locally, as are the most popular soft drinks. Liquor, some liqueurs, and American beer and soft drinks are available at the commissary. Bring favorite brands of pipe tobacco and cigars.

Basic Services

Shoe repair is adequate but expensive. Drycleaning is available and expensive, and occasionally clothes are damaged in the process. Few commercial laundries exist.

Beauty salons and barbershops are plentiful; service ranges from unsatisfactory to good; and most are inexpensive.

Radio repair is satisfactory.

Automobile repair is not satisfactory, for American or European cars. Parts for American- and even some foreign-made cars must be ordered from the manufacturer.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is available and inexpensive. Most speak some French, and few speak any English. The employer sometimes provides food, lodging, and uniforms, but none of these is required. Local customs require additional expenses such as daily transportation costs and holiday gratuities.

Domestics are not included in the Tunisian Government's social security system. However, some Tunisian customs must be respected; e.g., provision for 1 day off a week for full-time help, and 12 days' paid vacation after 1 year of employment. No regulation exists for separation pay, but it is usual to give 1 week's salary for each year of employment.

Medical insurance to cover servants medical expenses is highly advisable. Work-accident insurance for household help and gardeners is mandatory.

The CLO maintains a file of domestics seeking employment with Americans.

Extra help for cocktail or dinner parties may be requested through the Personnel Section of the Embassy.

Religious Activities

Religious denominations represented in Tunis are Moslem, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Jewish, and Greek and Russian Orthodox.

Catholic and Protestant services are in French and English. Mass is said in English at St. Jeanne d'Arc Church, located near the Embassy. St. George's Church, located in the medina, is Anglican and holds Sunday services in English. Both churches have small English-language Sunday schools.

Jewish services are conducted every Friday–Saturday at the Grande Synagogue, 43 Avenue de la Liberte.

Education

Dependent Education

At Post. The American Cooperative School, designated as a local U.S. Government-sponsored school and established in 1959, has facilities for over 140 children from kindergarten through grade 9.

Instructors are qualified teachers from the U.S. and international communities. Instruction at the school is in English. French is taught in grades 1–9. The school's curriculum is similar and compares favorably with those in U.S. public schools. However, because of the school's size, no special education classes are offered. Almost all American children attend the school, as do children from other diplomatic missions.

As soon as you know you will be enrolling a child in ACST, advise the school of number of children, and age/grade level expected to enter. All new students are tested before admission to determine grade placement. A registration form with its attached health sheet must be completed and presented along with academic records from former schools attended. There are no teachers/classes for children with learning disabilities.

The school year begins in September and continues until mid-June. Hours are from 8:30–11:45 am for kindergarten and until 3 pm for all other grades. Round-trip bus transportation from designated bus stops is provided for grades 1–9, but only one-way, *to* school, for kindergarten.

Public schools and private Catholic, Jewish, and Moslem schools are available at all levels, including high school. A few private French nurseries are open in Tunis and its suburbs for 3- and 4-year-olds. They operate from September to June, five mornings and four afternoons a week, and cost about $40 a month. French is not required for entry.

Tunisian public and private schools are similar to those in France. From a U.S. point of view, the French and Tunisian schools have a rigid curriculum and long hours of class work. Fluency in French is imperative. Some classes are held in Arabic.

Americans have sent their children, with mixed results, to one of the two French lycees operating in Tunis (Mutuelleville) and La Marsa. Lycees start in late September and run through June. Annual tuition for 1985–86 is about $1,200. Uniforms are required. In addition, parents must pay for textbooks and supplies.

Adults can take courses at the University of Tunis, although the need for proficiency in French could be a limiting factor. The CLO has brochures on a wide range of correspondence courses available in the U.S.

Away From Post. In 1984–85, three junior and senior high school children attended schools in Switzerland, England, and the U.S. The 1984–85 away-from-post allowance was $10,350.

Torrejon (Spain) American High School (APO New York 09283) is operated by the Department of Defense. The school is coeducational, and instruction is in English. The school term runs from September to June with 2 weeks' vacation at Christmas and 1 week at Easter. Children must return to Tunis during these holidays because the dormitories are closed.

The Notre Dame International School is at 796 Via Aurelia, 00165 Rome. Conducted by the Brothers of the Holy Cross, the school provides a liberal education in accordance with American tradition. Notre Dame provides instruction for grades 8–12. Tuition and room and board costs for 1983–84 were $7,500. The faculty is mainly American and instruction is in English. Vacations include 2 weeks at Christmas and 2 weeks at Easter.

Notre Dame is not coeducational, but its sister school for girls is the Marymount International School at Via di Villa Lauchli 180, 00191 Rome. Courses and school calendars are similar, and tuition and room and board costs for 1983–84 were $3,585. The faculty consists mostly of nuns of the Order of the Sacred Heart of Mary.

St. Stephen's School (Via Aventina 3, 00153 Rome) is a 4-year coeducational school emphasizing college preparatory work. It is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Room and board and tuition costs for 1984–85 were approximately $7,648.

Brochures for these and other schools are available at post.

Post Orientation Program

The Embassy periodically schedules an orientation session dealing with the programs and activities of all agencies.

The CLO opened in May 1980. It serves as a focal point for community-related services and activities, and offers counseling and referral information in such areas as travel, education, and dependent employment. An active sponsor program as well as special newcomer activities have been developed to help meet the needs of all incoming personnel and their families. Some of these activities include a guided tour of Tunis and its suburbs, newcomer potluck dinners, orientation sessions with various agencies, tapes and literature on cultural adaptation, etc. Prospective arrivals in Tunis are encouraged to visit the FLO office in the State Department (room 1216-A) or write to CLO in Tunis. After arrival in Tunis, all newcomers and their families should stop by the CLO.

Recreation and Social Life

Sports

Tunis and its environs offer good facilities for tennis, golf, hunting, scuba diving, and some fishing. Swimming, sailing, and windsurfing are also popular, but the beaches close to and in Tunis used for swimming have been found from time to time to be contaminated and unsafe. Check with the Medical Unit before going to the beach. Tunis has three municipal swimming pools, two of which are heated in winter. The weather is suitable for swimming from June through September.

The tennis club near the Embassy has 14 tennis courts and a volleyball court. Membership is expensive. For a small fee, private club courts are also available in the suburbs. The clay court at the Ambassador's residence may, at the Ambassador's discretion, be made available to Embassy employees. In Tunisia, white is still worn on the court, but is not mandatory everywhere. Bring tennis balls to post; local ones are expensive and of poor quality. The commissary usually carries a supply.

Some Americans play on the 18-hole golf course at La Soukra, about 7 miles from Tunis. The course is good from October to June but is very dry in summer. The greens are a mixture of sand, crushed olive pits, and crude oil. Lunch and dinner are served in the attractive clubhouse, which may also be used for large receptions. Annual dues are expensive, and nonmembers can play at daily or weekly rates. The magnificent new 18-hole course at the resort of Port El Kantaoui in northern Sousse, about a 3-hour drive from Tunis, is great for a golf weekend.

Many Mission personnel and some dependents engage in regular jogging programs. A chapter of the Hash House Harriers is located here.

A Sunday softball game among American community members has become a popular family affair. The game is held at the American Cooperative School. A standard six-lane bowling alley complete with automatic pin setters is located at the Baie des Singes Hotel in a northern suburb of Tunis.

Saltwater fishing and scuba diving are popular sports. Little freshwater fishing exists in Tunisia because only one river flows year round. Motorboats may be rented, but no facilities are available for chartering boats for offshore fishing. Spear fishing with scuba equipment is prohibited, but it is permitted to spear fish while using snorkeling gear. No facilities presently exist for refilling scuba bottles.

Wild game is in season from September to June. A shotgun can be used for small game hunting. Open season dates vary only slightly each year and are published each August. Quail, duck, woodcock, snipe, partridge, and wild boar are the most common game. Hunters are limited exclusively to shotguns in the pursuit of game, and 12-gauge is the most common. Rifled slugs are required for boar hunting; buckshot is prohibited. Hunters must have a permit for the weapon, a hunting license, and insurance. **See** also Firearms and Ammunition.

Camping is popular among Americans. Many undeveloped and a few developed campsites are in the countryside. If you like camping, bring all equipment with you since it is scarce and expensive in Tunisia.

Kassar Said racetrack is about 5 miles from Tunis. The racing season is October 1 through May. Purebred Arab and English racehorses—some locally bred and some imported—and imported trotters compete for the purses. Kassar Said has a riding club; another is in La Soukra.

Sailing centers around the yacht clubs at La Goulette and Sidi Bou Said. Various types of boats, including sloops and ketches, are available. The Tunisia Sporting Federation organizes and holds races sporadically. No single racing class of boats exists in Tunisia.

Girl Scout, Brownie, Boy Scout, and Cub Scout troops are very active. The groups hold weekly meetings at the American School after school hours.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The CLO occasionally organizes group activities, such as museum and sightseeing tours. The American Women's Club of Tunisia also organizes a number of interesting sightseeing trips to the attractive countryside and seashore. You can make endless sightseeing and picnic trips to the Punic, Roman, and Byzantine ruins scattered throughout Tunisia.

A playground and an excellent small zoo are located in Belvedere Park near the Embassy. Merry-go-rounds, teeter-totters, and small donkey carts are popular with children.

The Bardo Museum in Tunis contains the largest and most beautiful collection of Roman mosaics in the world, as well as Punic and Roman statues, coins, and jewelry.

Tunisia's main cities are all within easy driving distance of Tunis and are connected by good blacktopped roads. The port city of Bizerte is 40 miles to the north through pleasant countryside. The ruins of ancient Utica may be visited just off the Bizerte highway. Sousse (87 miles from Tunis) and Sfax (166 miles) are central Tunisian seaports. The old Arab sections of both cities are still encircled by ancient ramparts and watchtowers. Sousse, a popular tourist attraction with its beautiful beaches, has a small, excellent museum devoted to Roman and early Christian mosaics. Nearby are catacombs as extensive as those in Rome. Just north of Sousse is the huge new complex called Port El Kantaoui with its 18-hole golf course, magnificent harbor, luxury hotels, villas, riding school, tennis courts, pools, and beaches.

Sfax, Tunisia's second largest city, is a bustling commercial center. It is the terminal of the Sfax-Gafsa railroad and, with Gabes farther south, serves as a major port for the export of phosphates.

The fortified town of Monastir, a short distance from Sousse, is the site of an early Christian monastery. It has a fine beach, scenic waterfront, and many attractive new hotels.

Kairouan is 100 miles southwest of Tunis in the center of a vast plain. Founded in A.D. 670 and long a holy city to Moslems, it is interesting for its mosques and tombs. Its Great Mosque is the most interesting Islamic structure in Tunisia. Kairouan is also a renowned rugmaking center.

Ain Draham, in the cork and oak forests of the Kroumirie Mountains 110 miles west of Tunis, offers a change of scene and climate. At an altitude of 2,600 feet, Ain Draham is pleasantly cool in summer and often has snow in winter. It offers excellent boar hunting.

About 1-hour south of Tunis are the picturesque seaside towns of Hammamet and Nabeul where you can swim at broad sandy beaches. At Nabeul you can watch Tunisian artisans work on rugs, baskets, and their famous pottery.

About 350 miles south of Tunis is Jerba, a palm-covered white sand island of 246 square miles, which retains much of the original Arab architecture. It has become a mecca for sun-seeking Europeans who come in droves year round. On the island is a Jewish colony of longstanding; its beautiful synagogue at Hara Kebira is well worth a visit. Daily flights to Jerba from Tunis are available year round.

The oases of Tozeur and Nefta, which produce fine dates, are 320 miles southwest of Tunis on the Algerian border and on the edge of the extensive Chott Jerid, a dry salt lake. Trips into the nearby Sahara can be arranged through hotels and travel agencies. Flights to Tozeur from Tunis are available twice weekly. The best time of year to visit the oasis is from late fall to early spring.

Roman ruins are scattered throughout Tunisia. Carthage, historically the most famous, is closest to Tunis—only 20 minutes by car. More extensive ruins can be seen at Dougga (70 miles), Thuburbo Majus (32 miles), and Sbeitla (160 miles). El Jem, 125 miles south of Tunis, has a coliseum almost as large as the one in Rome.

Tunisia is continuing an intensive program to improve tourist facilities throughout the country, including attractive modern hotels ranging from delux to economy. Train and bus transportation is available to most places of interest, but public transportation may be uncomfortable or inconvenient for longer distances. Many local travel agencies and hotels now operate modern air-conditioned buses, but it is more convenient to have your own car for trips.

Entertainment

The theater season in Tunis is November through May. Two companies present a series of six to eight well-known French-language plays. The Tunis Symphony Orchestra gives monthly concerts from November through May. Guest soloists and touring groups appear occasionally. Theater and symphony performances take place at the Municipal Theater in downtown Tunis.

Tunis and its suburbs have about 20 movie theaters that offer a wide selection of American and English films, with French dialog dubbed in. Italian, Spanish, Mexican, and Egyptian films are also occasionally shown. Most films, however, are French produced. Cultural centers, notably the French and Tunisian, offer films at little or no charge to the public.

Many festivals are celebrated in Tunisia. The Orange Festival of Cap Bon in March; the Festival of the Hawks in El Haouaria in April; music and dancing festivals in Hammamet, Jerba, Dougga, and Bizerte during the summer; the International Cultural Festival of Carthage in July; Monastir's Drama Festival in August; the camel festival in Souz in January; and many others.

Restaurants in Tunis and environs are attractive and the food is very good. Among those recommended are the Strasbourg, the Milanais, the Malouf, and Chez Slah. The national dish is couscous-semolina (a specially processed wheat) prepared with vegetables, meat, fowl, or fish, and a piquant sauce called harissa (hot red peppers). Another favorite dish is brik, a thin pastry envelope with an egg, meat, or tuna stuffing that is fried

In the summer, outdoor dining and dancing may be found along the seacoast. Many restaurants in the city close from mid-July to September.

Social Activities

Among Americans. The American Women's Club of Tunisia, founded in 1958, is an active organization which provides services to the American and international communities. All American women and wives of U.S. citizens residing in Tunisia can join; over a third of its membership is from the international community. The club helps Americans become better acquainted and provides a center for social, charity, and service activities. Club meetings offer a wide variety of programs and are held monthly except in summer.

The American Cooperative School plans periodic activities for children, such as sporting events and dances. It also has an active Hyper Club for students in grades 5–9; activities have included a bowling night, ski trip, beach parties, and a sightseeing trip to Roman ruins.

International Contacts. Tunisians, as a rule, tend to be warm and hospitable. Parties are informal, buffet-style lunches or dinners, with an abundance of food. Children may also be included, depending on the occasion. In general, it is preferable to avoid serving pork, as it is forbidden by the Koran and Moslems generally do not eat it. During the month of Ramadan, when fasting is observed, it is best not to have lunches—even those who are not fasting will likely not attend. Although whiskey, wine, and beer may be served, juices or soft drinks should also be offered.

Official Functions

Nature of Functions

At official functions you should assist the host and hostess in making the affair a success. At official functions at the Ambassador's residence, officers should arrive 10 minutes ahead of the scheduled event.

Standards of Social Conduct

A memorandum on local protocol, providing the necessary information concerning official calls and general social procedures, is given to you on arrival.

The Ambassador should bring at least 500 calling cards. The Deputy Chief of Mission and the section chiefs should bring about 200 cards. Many officers have their cards printed at post in French and English. Calling cards are useful for other officers in their contacts with Tunisian officials and with other members of the diplomatic communities. Officers should also bring with them, or have printed at post, engraved invitation cards. Informals

are useful for thank-you notes and invitations. Arrival and departure announcements of diplomatic personnel on the diplomatic list are sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other diplomatic missions by diplomatic note.

Special Information

Visitors to Tunisia will find no restrictions on travel within the country, but care must be exercised in visiting certain frontier regions.

DOD Personnel

No U.S. military facilities (APO/FPO, PX/BX, etc.) exist in Tunisia and no military aircraft are assigned. The Defense Attache Office (DAO) and the U.S. Military Liaison Office (USLOT) are the main U.S. military organizations, along with the Embassy Marine Security Guard. Some DOD military personnel (foreign area officers) are assigned to FSI in Tunis for Arabic language studies and Middle East orientation travel. These students are attached to DAO for administrative purposes.

Housing. Some DAO personnel live in U.S. Government-owned quarters. Floor plans, pictures, and property listings for these quarters are on file with the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) Housing Office in Washington. All other DAO and USLOT personnel and DOD students attending FSI are provided U.S. Government-leased quarters. Temporary lodging allowance is authorized until temporary or permanent quarters are located.

Furnishings. U.S. Government-owned basic furniture is available for DAO and USLOT personnel. The household goods weight allowance has been reduced accordingly. Furnishings include major appliances (stove, refrigerator, freezer, washer and dryer, and window air-conditioning units). China, glassware, bed and bath linens, ironing boards, and kitchen utensils are not furnished.

If you are assigned to USLOT, write that office when you receive your orders for specific details on government housing and furnishings.

DOD/FSI students are authorized their full Joint Travel Regulation (JTR) weight allowance since U.S. Government furnishings are not provided. All major appliances are provided in U.S. Government-leased quarters. Bring 220/110v transformers and stabilizers to protect your own appliances.

Uniform Requirements. Uniforms are worn infrequently for official and social occasions in Tunisia and are required for temporary duty purposes in Europe. DOD personnel must arrive in Tunisia wearing civilian clothing. The normal duty uniform is civilian attire. Uniform requirements for the services are as follows:

Army Officers:
Army Green (lightweight preferred)
Army Blue (lightweight preferred)
Army White (optional for officers; lightweight preferred)
Raincoat

Army Enlisted:
Army Green (lightweight preferred)
Army Blue (optional, lightweight preferred)
Raincoat

Navy Officers:
Service Dress Blue
Winter Blue
Summer White
Service Dress White
Mess Dress Blue and White Jacket (optional)
Raincoat
Wash Khaki (2 sets)

USMC Enlisted:
Dress Blue A
Summer/Winter Service A
Summer Service C
Utility Uniform
Raincoat

Air Force Officers:
Class A
Combination 1
Mess Dress
Ceremonial Whites
Raincoat

Air Force Enlisted:
Class A
White shirt/bow tie
Raincoat

No field equipment is required for DAO or USLOT personnel. However, DAO and USLOT Army personnel should bring at least one fatigue uniform with cap, boots, and field jackets; Navy personnel, one dungaree or working uniform. FSI military students should bring two sets of field uniforms, worn on occasional temporary duty and orientation tours outside Tunisia. FSI military students should bring all their uniforms because they may not return to the U.S. before reassignment.

Clothing. Since civilian clothing is the duty uniform in Tunisia, you will need more civilian clothes than usual. Summer/winter civilian clothing allowance is authorized for enlisted personnel. For USLOT, civilian business suit or sport coat is duty uniform.

Dependent Education. Primary school-age children attend the Amerian Cooperative School of Tunis, which has kindergarten through grade 9. Kindergarten is not a prerequisite for entry into grade 1. The service pays tuition and fees for all DOD students attending this school. No English-speaking high school is available in Tunisia, but high school dependents may be enrolled as dormitory students in the DOD high school at Torrejon AFB, Madrid, Spain. Room and board and three round trips a year are paid by the service. The French Lycee de Mutuelleville in Tunis has been approved as a DOD tuition fee school. The school has French grade levels corresponding to grades 7–12 in American schools; instruction is in French.

Language Requirements. Defense Attache personnel, Chief USLOT (CHUSLOT), and USLOT Material Program officers must be proficient in French; attaches and their spouses should know conversational French. Most military conversations involving the DAO and CHUSLOT are in French, and French is usually spoken at diplomatic functions. It is desirable, but not essential, that the attaches be qualified in Arabic.

Dependents are encouraged to learn at least some French for a more enjoyable tour. Funds are authorized for language training of DAO and USLOT spouses at post.

Transportation for DOD Personnel. DOD personnel and their dependents performing PCS travel to Tunisia are required to use Category Z commercial air.

Automobiles. **See** Automobiles.

Postal and Pouch. **See** Mail and Pouch.

Calling Cards. The Defense and Service attaches and their spouses need calling cards. Suitable cards in French and Arabic are useful and can be obtained locally. A supply of these cards will be available for attaches when they arrive. The DAO Operations Coordinator needs no more than 100 cards. Diplomatically accredited

USLOT personnel and their spouses are required to have calling cards. Other personnel will probably use calling cards here as often as they would on other military assignments. Suitable invitations can be printed locally.

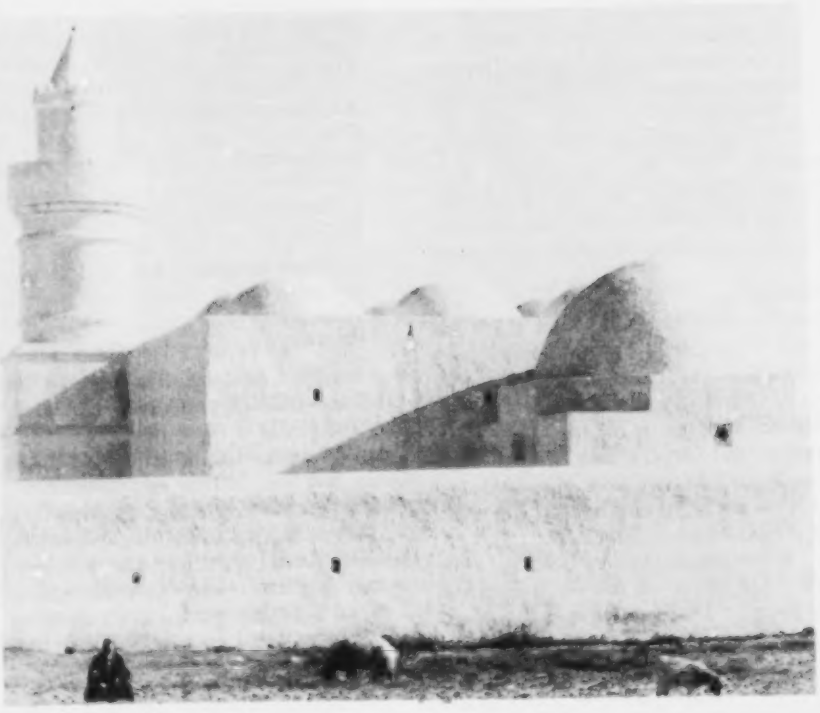
Money. Establish a U.S. checking account before leaving the U.S. and have a minimum of $1,000 cash in the account, in cash, or in travelers checks, when you arrive. The paycheck-to-bank option is recommended for payroll deposits.

Shipment. Depending on the origin of the shipment, household effects are normally routed via the New Orleans or Bayonne terminals. This decision is made by the transportation officer at your current post. Privately owned vehicles are normally turned in to the Bayonne, New Jersey Military Ocean Terminal for shipment to Tunis. Transit time may be as much as 90 days.

Transient Personnel. The uniform is not routinely worn in Tunisia. Arrive in civilian clothing unless specifically authorized to wear the uniform. Military aircrews who remain at the airport may stay in uniform. Navy personnel are authorized to wear the uniform while ashore during ships' visits, but they are encouraged to wear civilian clothing. U.S. military personnel on leave in the Tunis area should register at the DAO, American Embassy. Personnel on temporary duty in Tunisia will normally be met either by a member of the DAO or USLOT.

No lending facilities exist here, nor is there a military finance office. On a case-by-case basis, per diem advance of less than $200 may be paid. Visitors should have enough funds for all their expenses. The Embassy cashier will cash personal checks drawn on U.S. banks. Major credit cards (American Express, Visa) are generally honored in large hotels, restaurants, and many business establishments.

Hotels in Tunisia are often full, especially in the summer. Personnel coming to Tunisia on temporary duty should write the DAO for reservations a minimum of 30 days prior to estimated arrival date. Reservations must be canceled 48 hours in advance or you may be charged for the first day.



Above: Medina scene, Tunis.
Below: Mosque El Bassi, Jerba.

Notes For Travelers

Getting to the Post

Sea travel via Marseilles, Genoa, or Naples is considered direct when traveling from the U.S. to Tunis. Direct air travel from Washington to Tunis is via Rome, Paris, or Frankfurt. An overnight rest stop is authorized only if the trip is 14 hours or more.

Shipment of Effects. Household effects and airfreight should be marked and consigned to:

American Ambassador (Employee's Initials)
American Embassy
Tunis, Tunisia

Household effects are usually transshipped through ELSO. Only the employee's initials, not the employee's name, should appear on containers. Automobiles are usually shipped directly to Tunis or are transshipped via ELSO Antwerp or via Marseille. Mark for:

Amerian Embassy
Tunis, Tunisia
For: (Full Name)

For automobiles, employees should ensure that the correct vehicle engine number and/or serial number appears on shipping documents and should hand-carry one set of keys and copies of the vehicle registration to post. Please note: motorized vehicle must be shipped as privately owned vehicles. Motorcycles, mopeds, etc., must be crated and shipped separately from household effects. Please mail copies of shipping documents (AWB, GBL, etc.) to post as soon as effects are shipped and carry additional copies of all shipping documents to post.

Unaccompanied airbaggage can take up to 6 weeks after the employee's arrival to be cleared and delivered, so it is imperative that you include in your luggage any medicines, checks, clothing, or other necessities. You should also arrive with a minimum of four passport-sized pictures for each family member. These will be used for Tunisian visa and identity cards.

The above information on shipping is subject to change. Please contact post for the most current instructions.

Arrival. You and your dependents will be met on arrival and assisted through customs by someone from the Embassy. If plans change unexpectedly and you are not met, taxi service is available from the airport or seaport.

On the first workday after arrival, you will be picked up at your residence by an official car and driven to the office. You should report directly to the Personnel Office for processing. The Embassy provides an information and orientation kit to all new employees. Welcome Kits containing dishes, glasses, pots and pans, silverware, blankets, sheets, and towels can be borrowed from the Embassy.

Customs, Duties, and Passage

Customs and Duties

Officers and employees of all agencies are granted free entry of all unaccompanied baggage, including household and personal effects. Employees without diplomatic title at post are entitled to duty-free entry for only 6 months after arrival at post (see Import Restrictions). Items imported duty free must be for the personal use or consumption of the employee or dependents and may only be sold to others with duty-free privileges. Commissary items cannot be resold or given away except to other commissary members. American personnel do not pay customs duties on automobiles at initial entry.

Employees should be advised that clearance of household effects and airfreight cannot be initiated until the employee arrives at post. Clearance is normally obtained within 4 or 5 weeks after initiation. A privately owned vehicle can be cleared quickly after its arrival, provided that it has valid license plates, the owner is at post, and has a valid drivers license and the original vehicle registration.

Import Restrictions. Nondiplomatic staff are granted duty-free importation privileges for only 6 months after entry into Tunisia and are limited to duty-free importation of one privately owned vehicle, one household effects shipment, one airfreight shipment, and one parcel post package.

There are no restrictions on automobiles. Tunisian customs law requires that a heavy duty be paid by purchasers of vehicles which have entered in duty-free status, unless the purchaser has duty-free status. Weapons: see Firearms and Ammunition. Alcohol/tobacco/food: see Food. Pets: see Pets.

Passage

A valid passport is required for all Americans arriving in Tunisia. A Tunisian visa is not required for a stay of 4 months or less. A residence visa and a Tunisian identity card for all personnel assigned to Tunisia can be obtained through the Personnel Office of the Embassy upon arrival.

If you plan to drive to Tunisia you must have a valid drivers license and registration papers. Insurance valid in Tunisia may be purchased at the port of entry (see Automobiles).

Pets

There are no restrictions on the importation of pets. However, to avoid administrative delays, pets should accompany owners when possible. Owners should have documents indicating that the pet has been vaccinated against rabies and that the vaccination is at least 30 days but no more than 1 year old, and a health certificate not more than 14 days old. Adequate veterinary services are available in Tunis.

Firearms and Ammunition

You are permitted to ship personally owned weapons only in your airfreight. They must be packed in a separate unmarked box to facilitate clearance. To facilitate registration, the type, make, gauge, and serial number of each firearm should be listed on the inventory of per-

sonal effects. Firearms may be sent to post without an export license provided they are consigned to American personnel for personal use and are not for resale.

Only the following nonautomatic firearms and ammunition may be brought to Tunisia: two shotguns and 200 rounds of shotgun ammunition. Tunisian and European cartridges are available locally.

After arrival, a permit to carry arms must be obtained and four passport-sized photos submitted. Insurance and a hunting license are also required if you plan to hunt. Cost of permit, insurance, and license is about $55 a year.

If you wish to bring weapons to post, write in advance to the administrative officer for specific, up-to-date instructions. Prior approval of the Chief of Mission is not necessary for bringing in weapons.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The official currency unit is the dinar, divided into 1,000 millimes. One dinar 500 millimes may be written as 1,500 or 1D500. At the current exchange rate (July 1985), U.S. $1 = 826 millimes (1D =U.S. $1.24). Coins are in denominations of 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500 millimes, and 1 dinar; notes are of 500 millimes, and 1, 5, 10, and 20 dinars. Tunisian dinars may not be imported or exported. Tunisian law permits the following to be exported without prior authorization by the Central Bank:

- Dollars, foreign currency, and travelers checks accompanying the traveler at the time of entry, provided they were declared at time of entry; and
- Dollars, foreign currency, and travelers checks legally acquired in Tunisia and not purchased with dinars. Documentary proof of legal acquisition must be presented.

Generally, travelers with official or diplomatic passports are not requested to declare currency at the time of their departure.

Dollars or dollar instrument transactions within the country, other than exchanges at official banks or government stores, are illegal under Tunisian law. Travelers checks may be exchanged at hotels and banks for dinars. Embassy, AID, and USIA employees should import a minimum amount in cash and travelers checks. Employees must exchange their dollars for dinars through the Embassy cashier. Employees are urged to maintain an account in the U.S., preferably with provision for automatic overdraft.

The metric system of weights and measures is used in Tunisia.

Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property

All personnel pay transaction taxes and other indirect taxes on purchases.

Local law and customs regulations drastically limit the sale of personal effects in Tunisia. All U.S. Government employees should plan on taking out of the country all of the major items with which they entered unless they are sold to people with duty-free privileges.

All automobiles must be in the country for 2 years before thay may be sold, unless the owner is departing post, and they must be offered first to those with free-entry privileges. If no such person is found, they may be sold to someone without free-entry privileges, but the duty must be paid. These regulations apply to all U.S. agency personnel in Tunisia.

Complete details concerning the sale of personal property are on file at post.

Facilities

The Embassy cashier provides accommodations exchange and cashes personal and U.S. Government checks for all official Americans. The Embassy will convert dinars into dollars for departing American employees only with a certificate explaining the circumstances of the transaction. All Americans on official business should exchange money with the Embassy cashier.

Citicorp travelers checks are available to commissary members. They may be purchased with a personal check, which should include the 1½% fee.

Recommended Reading

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

Abun-Nasr, Jamil M. *A History of the Maghreb.* Cambridge Univ. Press: Cambridge, 1978.

American Women's Club of Tunisia. *Living in Tunisia.* Tunis, 1982.

Ceres Productions. *Antique Cities in Tunisia.* Tunis, 1971.

_____. *Bijoux Tunisiens.* Tunis, 1977.

_____. *Carthage, a Visit to the Ruins.* Tunis, 1974.

_____. *Lumières de Tunisie.* Tunis, 1976. Marvelous collection of color photographs with accompanying text in English, French, and Arabic.

_____. *Mosaiques de Tunisie.* Tunis, 1976. English translation available in Tunis.

Charles-Picard, Colette and Gilbert. *Daily Life in Carthage at the Time of Hannibal.* Macmillan: New York, 1961.

Folkloric musicians, southern Tunisia.

Brass souk, Tunis.

Below: Fruit and nut souk, Medina, Tunis.
Right: Shoe souk, Tunis.

_____. *Life and Death of Carthage: A Survey of Punic History and Culture from its Birth to the Final Tragedy.* Taplinger: New York, 1969.
Davidson, Alan. *Mediterranean Seafood.* Penguin Books: New York, 1976.
Encyclopedia Britannica, eds. *The Arabs: People and Power.* Bantam Books: New York, 1978.
Fitter, Heinzel. *Birds of Britain and Europe, with North Africa and the Middle East.* Collins: England, 1971.
Flaubert, Gustave. *Salammbo.* Trans. by A.J. Krailsheimer. Penguin Books: New York, 1977.
Fodor's Tunisia. David McKay: New York, 1973.
Glubb, Sir John. *A Short History of the Arab Peoples.* Stein and Day: New York, 1970.
Gourmet Magazine. November 1970 (Tunisian Cookery); November 1972 (Tastes of Tunisia); November 1976 (Tunisia); December 1976 (Tunisia Beyond Couscous and Jerba).
The Koran. N.J. Dawood, trans. Penguin Books: New York, 1964.
Moore, Clement Henry. *Tunisia Since Independence.* Univ. of California Press: Berkeley, 1965.
Nelson, Harold D., ed. *Tunisia, A Country Study.* American University Press: Washington, D.C., 1979. The most recent area handbook on Tunisia prepared for the State Department.
Nelson, Nina. *Tunisia.* Hasting House: New York, 1974.
Patai, Raphael. *The Arab Mind.* Charles Scribner's Sons: New York, 1976.
Revault, Jacques. *Designs and Patterns from North African Carpets and Textiles.* Dover Publications: New York, 1973.
Thurston, Hazel. *Travellers' Guide to Tunisia.* Jonathan Cape: London, 1979. Not available in Tunisia.
Tomkinson, Michael. *Tunisia, A Holiday Guide.* Jarrold and Sons: Norwich, 1976. Available in Tunisia.
Tunisie, Gide Bleus-hachett: Paris, 1977.
Warmington, Brian. *Carthage.* Praeger: New York, 1969.

Local Holidays

Tunisia celebrates the following secular holidays:

New Year's Day	January 1
Remembrance Day	January 18
Independence Day	March 20
Martyrs' Day	April 9
Labor Day	May 1
Victory Day	June 1
Republic Day	July 25
President Bourguiba's Birthday	August 3
Women's Day	August 13
Memorial Day	September 3
Evacuation Day	October 15

In addition, four religious holidays are celebrated throughout the country, but their dates are variable since Islam follows the lunar calendar. These holidays are: Aid El Kebir, Aid El Seghr, Mouled, and Ras El Am El Hejri. Ramadan, the Moslems holy month, is observed by many Tunisians with fasting from sunrise to sunset and feasting at night.

Mosaic: Ulysses on his boat, Bardot museum.